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A PACKET OF TEA

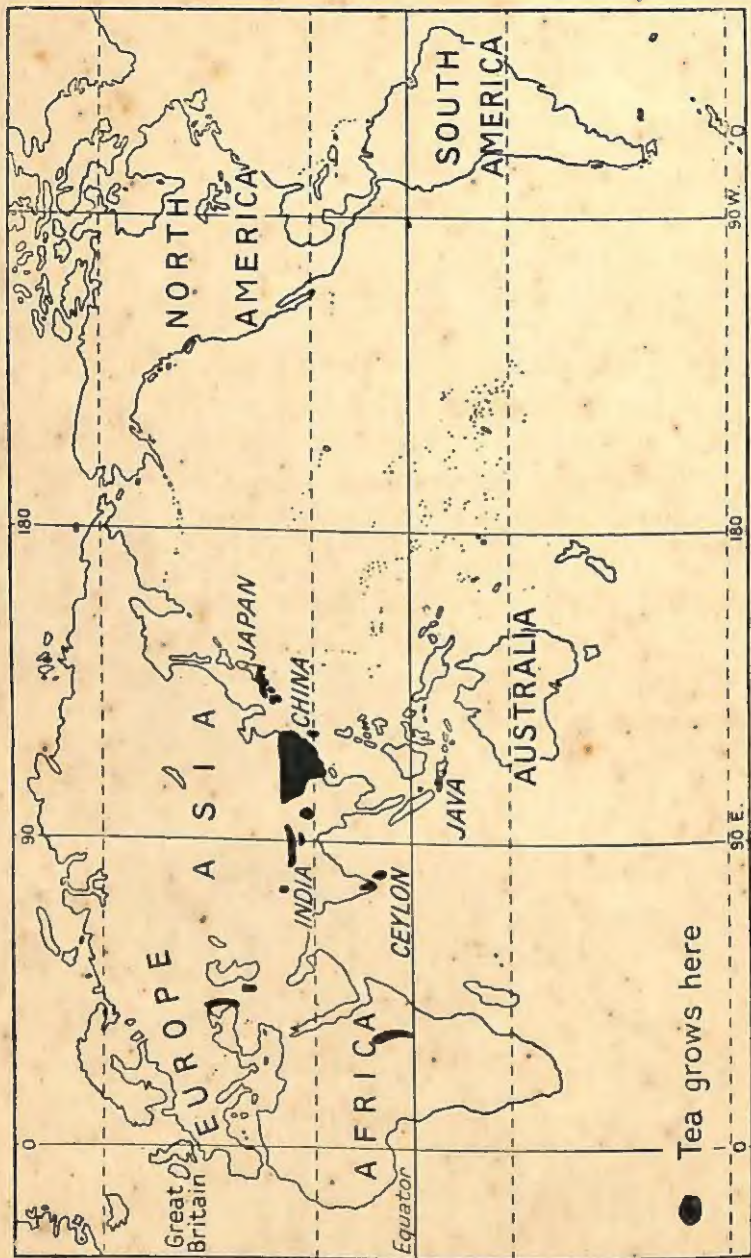
by

GWEN CROSS

THINGS WE USE

BOOK ONE

L O N G M A N S



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CHAPTER I

TEA

TEA is the dried leaves of the tea bush. This bush grows in hot countries that have enough rain. It grows on the sides of hills. It will not grow well if the water in the soil cannot flow away quickly from the roots.

Long ago the tea bush grew only in China and Japan. The Chinese and Japanese drank tea in shallow cups that did not have handles. They did not put milk and sugar in their tea. In China this drink was called chi.

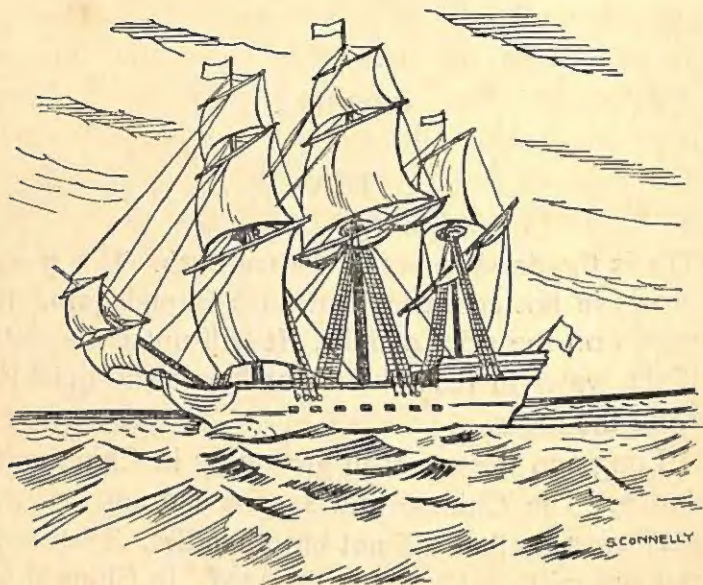


JAPANESE DRINKING TEA

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THINGS WE USE



SAILING SHIP BRINGING TEA TO EUROPE
200 YEARS AGO

In 1658 traders brought tea to England and Europe from these Eastern lands. They sold a pound of tea in those days for £5. Only rich people had enough money to buy it. When traders brought more tea to Europe they sold one pound for 10 to 15 shillings. Then more people could buy tea. Two hundred years ago in England people who lived away from the towns had heard about tea, but many of them had not tasted it.

A PACKET OF TEA

Men then took tea bushes from China and Japan and planted them in other lands. The British planted tea on the sides of hills in India, Burma and Ceylon. The Dutch planted it in the East Indies, now called Indonesia. All these places are in south-east Asia. They are hot lands that have heavy rains for some months each year.

There are big plantations of tea bushes now in these lands. They send away many cases of tea each year to other countries. A lot of tea from India and Ceylon goes to the British Isles and Europe. Tea from the East Indies often goes to Australia and New Zealand. Tea from China and Japan often goes to America.

England imports more than two hundred million pounds of tea each year. When there is enough of a thing for everyone to buy what they need, men can sell that thing for a little money. Then we say it is cheap. At the beginning of this century tea was very cheap. A pound cost only a few shillings.

THINGS TO DO

1. Look at a map of south-east Asia. Find the countries where tea grows. Write down their names. Name two big islands in Indonesia.
2. Look at some tea leaves. Stir them into (a) hot water, and (b) boiling water. Why do we make tea always with boiling water?

THINGS WE USE

QUESTIONS

1. What is tea?
 2. Why do men plant tea bushes on the sides of hills?
 3. Name two countries that send away tea and two countries that receive tea. Learn the meaning of the words export and import.
 4. How many pounds of tea does England import each year? Write the answer in words and in figures. Try to find how many pounds of tea your country imports, or exports, each year.
- A. Write the opposites of these sentences. Change the words underlined.
- (a) The cup is shallow.
 - (b) He is a poor man.
 - (c) My tea is hot.
- B. In 1700 men sold tea for £5 a pound.
In 1945, they sold tea for 3/- a pound.
In which year was tea cheap?
What is the price of tea a pound in your country?
- C. From paragraph 3 find the past time of these verbs:
- bring sell live taste*
- What does each word mean in your language?

CHAPTER II

THE TEA PLANTATION

TEA plantations are often very big and many people work in them. Men dig the soil. Women and girls plant tea seeds and pick the tea. They wear bright-coloured cotton clothes called in India saris. A sari is a very long piece of calico. They fold the saris round their bodies two or three times. They put the ends up over their heads to protect them from the hot sun.

Tea seeds have hard skins. Before they plant them women often put the seeds in the sun. The



INDIAN WOMAN WEARING A SARI

THINGS WE USE

hard skin dries and splits. They plant the seeds in boxes and cover the boxes with wet grass. Only fresh tea seeds will grow. The young plants are called seedlings. When the seedlings are big enough the women take them from the boxes and plant



TRANSPLANTING TEA SEEDLINGS

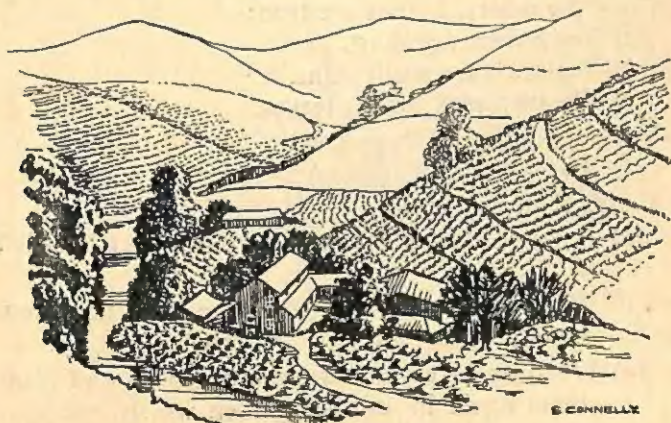
them in another garden. We call this transplanting the seedlings. In the nursery garden the seedlings grow slowly. In ten months they are one foot high.

The tea plants grow in the nursery garden for eighteen months. The women then transplant them to the big plantations. They plant them in straight lines. In two or three years the plants are young bushes. Women and girls often walk between the lines of bushes and pick off the ends of the branches. Then the bushes cannot grow tall.

A PACKET OF TEA

Many little buds grow and make new branches. The bushes stay short, strong, and flat-topped. When we cut branches from a tree to make it grow better, we say that we prune the tree. Tea bushes are three or four feet high. In Ceylon, they are often only two feet high. By and by it is easy for the pickers to pick the leaves from the short bushes. Women weed between the bushes. They bury all the weeds and prunings round the plants to feed the soil.

Big trees grow on the tops of the hills to protect the tea from cold winds. The tea houses are often at the bottom of the hill. A school for the children, a hospital for the sick, and stores where the plantation workers can buy anything they need, are sometimes built by the owners of the plantation.



TEA PLANTATION

THINGS WE USE

THINGS TO DO

1. Try to find a picture of a woman wearing a sari. If you may, cut it out and paste it in your book. Copy under the picture the last three sentences in paragraph 1.
2. Cut off the end piece from a branch of any bush near your school. Tie a piece of calico on the branch so that you will know which branch you have cut. Watch new buds open and make new branches lower down on this branch.

QUESTIONS

1. Why do they put tea seeds in the sun?
 2. In what country do girls wear saris?
 3. How many months do the seedlings grow in the nursery garden?
 4. What do the women do to make the bushes stay short?
- A. Copy the sentences that are true:
- (a) Tea bushes are short.
 - (b) Tea seeds have soft skins.
 - (c) The men pick the tea leaves.
- B. Write the plural of these words:
- box branch body foot house*
- C. Finish these sentences:
- (a) A very young plant grown from a seed is called a . . .
 - (b) When we cut off branches to make a tree grow better, we say we . . . the tree.
 - (c) When we take plants from one garden and plant them again in another garden we say we . . . them.

CHAPTER III

PICKING TEA

WHEN the tea bushes are three or four years old they are short, strong and flat-topped, and have many branches. Women and girls now begin to pick the leaves for tea. Each carries a long, narrow basket on her back. She pulls the end of her sari over her head. She walks between the straight lines of bushes. She picks from the top of each branch the soft stem with the very little leaves. Her fingers work very quickly. She puts the leaves in her basket.



PICKING TEA



TEA ARRIVING AT THE TEA HOUSE

When her basket is full she sends it to the tea house at the bottom of the hill. Sometimes the baskets go down the hill side hanging on a strong wire. This wire is tied to a post in the plantation and to a post at the bottom of the hill. Sometimes there are roads in the plantation. Then the filled baskets can be put on to carts or motor lorries. The carts are pulled by oxen or buffaloes. Buffaloes in the Far East are like very big oxen.

When the baskets of tea arrive at the tea house men weigh them. Each basket has the picker's name on it. The headman has a book. He writes in the book how many pounds each basket weighs and the picker's name. The pickers get wages for the pounds of tea they pick each day. Some women pick quickly and fill several baskets each

A PACKET OF TEA



TEA BASKETS BEING WEIGHED

day. One woman can pick 70 pounds of tea in one day.

It is very pretty to see a tea plantation with the people picking between the straight, tidy lines of green bushes, wearing their bright coloured saris, and carrying their long brown baskets on their backs.

In Ceylon, by the time the women have arrived at the end of a big plantation, the bushes from which they first picked are ready to be picked again. This is because Ceylon is always hot and has much rain. The tea leaves grow well all the year. Men get more tea from an acre of land in Ceylon than from an acre in any other country. Ceylon is only a little country but it exports more than 250 million pounds of tea a year.

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THINGS WE USE

THINGS TO DO

1. Draw a picture of a long, narrow basket like those in which the women collect tea.
2. An acre is a piece of land that measures 70 yards each side. Measure some land near your school. A quarter of an acre is 35 yards on each side. To measure the land make a yard measure on a piece of straight stick. How many feet make a yard?

QUESTIONS

1. Copy the sentence from paragraph 2 that tells you what part of the plant the women pick for tea.
2. How many pounds of tea can a woman pick in a day? What does lbs. stand for?
3. How many pounds of tea are exported from Ceylon each year?
4. Tell me one way the baskets of tea go down the hill to the tea house.

- A. Put one of these words into each of these sentences:

short straight narrow bright

- (a) The tea baskets are . . .
- (b) The saris have . . . colours.
- (c) The lines of tea bushes are . . .
- (d) The bushes are . . .

- B. A person who works is called a worker.

What do you call the women who pick the tea leaves?

What do you call the man who bakes the bread?

What do you call the man who teaches in school?

- C. Write in your own language these words:

weigh wage export pick branch

CHAPTER IV

PREPARING THE TEA

AT the tea house women put the leaves in wide, shallow baskets to dry in the sun for one or two hours. When the leaves are withered, the women carry the tea back into the house. They sit down on the floor and roll the leaves in little balls in their hands to press out a bitter juice. Sometimes they roll them on a mat or table.

The soft, wet leaves stay in heaps on the floor for a little time. The women take away any red or bad leaves. Then they put them on wire trays to dry over a fire. When they are dry they sift them

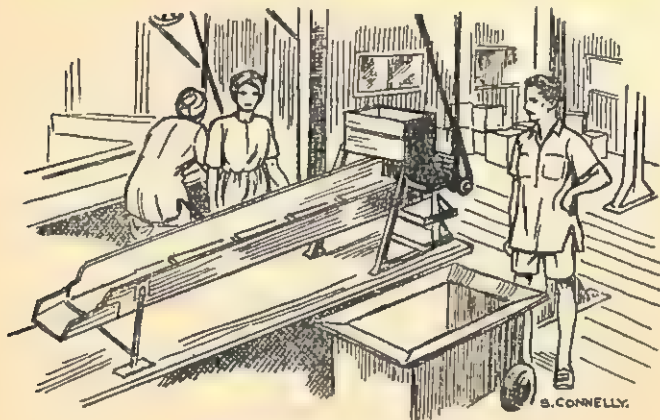


WOMEN PREPARING TEA

THINGS WE USE

through sieves. In this way they divide little leaves from big.

In China women still prepare the tea like this. But in other countries this work is now often done by machines. The tea house is called a factory.



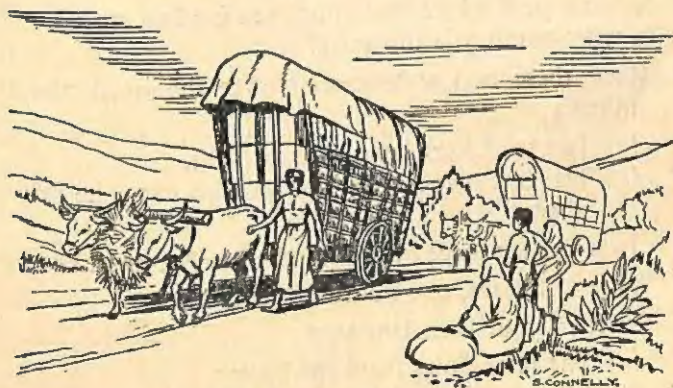
INSIDE A TEA FACTORY

First the leaves wither on trays in a shed that has many open windows. Then they go between big rollers. Machines make the heavy rollers go round. The pressed leaves come out from the rollers, soft, wet and twisted.

The pressed leaves stay in heaps for a little time as before. Then they go into a machine on trays. Very hot air blows over the leaves. They become black and dry. Machines move sieves gently and sift the dry leaves.

A PACKET OF TEA

In another room men then mix again the sifted tea. Good tea is made by mixing different kinds of tea together. The tea is packed in boxes made with thin wood. They have very thin lead inside them. Men put some tea in a box and then press it down with a piece of wood. They put more tea in the box and press it again. They do this until the box is full. Then they put a piece of lead over the top and fix the wood lid. Sea air is bad for tea. The lead does not let the sea air go into the box. Carts and lorries take the boxes of tea to a port. They are put on ships and go to other lands. There is a big tea store house in London. Often there are a million pounds of tea in this store. Men pack tea in quarter, half and one pound packets and send them to the towns for people to buy.



TEA BOXES BEING TAKEN TO A PORT

THINGS WE USE

THINGS TO DO

1. Try to find pictures of the work on a tea plantation (women rolling, drying or sifting tea or machines at work doing these things). If you may, cut out a picture and paste it in your book. Copy under the picture a sentence from this chapter that tells you about the picture.
2. A ship leaves Colombo, Ceylon, with tea for London. Follow on a map the journey of the ship. What seas and oceans will the ship cross? Name one port where the ship will stop.

QUESTIONS

1. What do the women do when the leaves have withered in the sun?
 2. What keeps out the sea air from the tea in the boxes?
 3. In what country is tea still prepared by hand?
 4. Name a port where very much tea is often stored.
In what country is this port?
- A. Read these two sentences. Notice the word "lead" in each.
- (a) The tea boxes have lead in them.
 - (b) The cart owner does not lead his oxen, he drives them.
- In which sentence do we say the "ea" sound like red?
- B. Write in figures, one quarter, one half.
- C. Write in your own language:
- (a) The juice flows from the leaves.
 - (b) Women sift the leaves.
 - (c) Men mix the tea and then pack it in boxes.

You may find these words difficult. When you meet them in the book try to think out for yourself what they mean. If you cannot do this, ask your teacher for help.

<i>Nouns</i>	<i>Adjectives</i>	<i>Verbs</i>
acre.	cheap	export
lead		import
nursery		prune
plantation		twist
seedling		wither
transplant		

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11. A Bar of Soap
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16. Money
17. A School Rubber
18. Salt
19. Glass and Plastics
20. Tin
21. A Cup of Coffee
22. A Bar of Chocolate
23. Silk
24. Leather

